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ABSTRACT

University retention rates for minority students are low and no significant increase in minority attendance is occurring. Most universities are not open-door, and special admissions policies for blacks have been halved since 1969. Other problems are the lessening of recruitment efforts and differences between blacks' expectations of the university and their experience there. Financial cutbacks have also caused changes in resource allocations throughout the institution. The black persistence rate is alarmingly low. It has been proposed that the successful retention and instruction of blacks demands a total institutional response to the requirements of operating a truly multiethnic campus, involving all levels of administration up to and including governing boards. One model for institutional responsiveness developed at the University of Maryland is described. (MSE)

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REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

University-wide Planning for the Minority Student

Rare is the higher educational institution which has not focused some attention on problems and procedures related to enrolling increased numbers of minority students. Increasingly, the term "multi-ethnic" is being used in reference to the large, multi-purpose, once predominantly white university; and a visit to one will verify that the university is, indeed, no longer mono-cultural.

Or will it? Current estimates are that about 7 to 7.4 per cent of college freshmen are black, a far from representative number. In fact, the Ford Foundation report on minority enrollment in higher education concludes that of all levels of postsecondary education, "the most severe underrepresentation" of minorities is in the university. This appears to be particularly true for public institutions, which only in 1973 for the first time enrolled a higher percentage of new black freshmen than private colleges.

Moreover, a recent annual survey of college freshmen, jointly sponsored by UCLA and the America Council on Education (ACE), indicates that the percentage of black freshmen in college fell for the second consecutive year in 1974. Census Bureau figures confirm a decrease for black men, not women. (Statistics on minority enrollment in higher education are elusive and once found, difficult to corroborate. Part of the problem is that many universities use only "eyeball estimates" in determining minority enrollment; others, attempting to determine minority representation by asking for racial descriptions on enrollment cards, run into opposition and often falsification from students who feel that the item is unconstitutional.)

"To bring in minority students and give them no assistance, to in fact just let them come and have the experience of failure, is a greater injustice than not admitting them at all."

—a black counselor

But while the statistical jury is out, those close to the subject concur—that university retention rates for minority students are low, and that, regardless of whether an enrollment decrease can be proven, certainly no significant increase in minorities is occurring. Both are rather startling conclusions, assuming that most schools have non-discriminatory policies, are actively recruiting black students, and have financial packages as well as special admissions programs for minorities "there for the asking."

Part of the problem, of course, is with those assumptions. Most universities (86 per cent) are no: open-door, according to the Cultural Study Center (CSC) at the University of Maryland—College Park. The overwhelming majority still rely on the traditional use of high school grades and test scores—both of which are being subjected to research evaluation to determine their effectiveness for minorities. (Jackie Irvine, an SREB Program Associate, has recently initiated a study to identify selection criteria which are more appropriate when applied to minority groups.)

In fact, according to CSC staff members, special admissions policies for blacks have been halved since 1969, when the center began studying black admissions in large universities. ("Special" refers to the use of standards either normed for blacks and minorities or more indicative of their likelihood of success in college.)

And even when a university is "open-door," when "anybody can get in if he wants to," the question still has to be asked, as Dr. H. Floyd Vallery, Assistant to the President of Auburn, put it, "Is anybody helping Blacks **want** to?"

Recruitment of blacks appears, according to several sources to be "slackening off." The ACE/UCLA study suggests that the burden of

accompanying financial aid and guided studies programs could be partially responsible.

Also possible, as Andre Beaumont of College Placement Services put it, is "not that black students expect more or too much, but that they expect something else, something different." (This can be particularly true, says Dr. Jesse Marshall, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at North Carolina A & T State University, if the student's first impression of the college is through a recruiter who "oversells" the university's commitment to minorities.) When students run into the red tape of bureaucracy, not to mention the same old prejudices, blatant or subtle, it's not only a jolt, but often a catalyst for separatism.

In the area of financing, the cutbacks can be measured in dollars and cents. Much federal money has been cut and, as as Dr. Freddie Groomes, Director of Florida State University's Human Affairs Office put it, "No one's increased the pot, but it's being divided among more and more people—women, middle-class students, other minorities."

All of these factors may serve to explain why black enrollments are slackening off. But what about the retention factor? Why is the percentage of black students annually dropping out of the white university "alarmingly high," according to Dr. Vallery and others.

"The black experience is a priori"

Black students, at least those surveyed recently on six predominantly white campuses—four in the South, and two in the North—are not inclined to perceive the multi-purpose university as being multi-ethnic. As one student summed up, "The white university is still white." She was speaking, concludes the principal investigator, Dr. Jesse Marshall, not just of low black student enrollment, nor of the dearth of blacks in non-menial positions on the university payroll. (Although the latter point, Dr. Marshall's study documents, is a constant sore point among students.)

Rather, she was appraising the entire orientation, environment and "soul" of the campus and, most likely, the surrounding community. For "white" is a cultural as well as a racial term, meant to describe, as Savannah State President Prince Jackson puts it, curricula "skewed toward developing an understanding and appreciation of Western European, Anglo-Saxon, German, Italian—but not African—cultures." It means consulting periodical guides that don't index black journals or newspapers, or discovering that the local barber doesn't know how to shape an Afro. It includes housing hassles, and the selection of student activities. ("Look at it this way," said one black student. "Next week if Al Green came to campus the place would be filled with blacks. If Three Dog Night came, it would be filled with whites.")

"How can the university liberate minorities from their conditions and yet not make them compromise their cultural heritage? That's today's dilemma."

As one counselor, echoing her many talks with minority students put it, "The fear of the black students is that they're not going to make it—not necessarily academically, but socially. They're afraid they can't survive the sheer uncomfortableness of always feeling alien and out-of-place."

Missing on the large university campus, as these students readily confirm, is any hookup with "the black experience" or any chance to develop a black identity. (Identity crises are a typical developmental pattern among college-age students anyhow, points out Dr. Anne Pruitt, a Case Western Reserve professor who has assisted on numerous reports for SREB. For the black "new student," who is often lacking in self-confidence anyway, there is an "additional layer of problems." Being on a white-oriented campus only disorients him or her further.)

Likewise missing are ways for the blacks to make whites on campus aware of black contributions to American culture and history. President Jackson summed up the problem this way. "The paradox of the whole matter was that the university sought minorities to instill a new hope in them, but the environment of the university served only to remind the minorities of the racism to which they were accustomed. Instead of liberating," he continues, "the university inadvertently reinforced the bitterness and misunderstandings of the minority students.

"And that," he underscored, "is the dilemma today. How can the university liberate minorities from their conditions and yet not make them compromise their cultural heritage?"

Jackson's question was voiced at a recent conference on university-wide planning for the minority student, sponsored by SREB's Institute for Higher Educational Opportunity (IHEO). Generally recognized by the forty conference participants—all representatives of the multi-purpose, public universities in the region—was the fact that despite many positive steps taken by most colleges and universities there are still "gaps of such significance" in meeting minority needs that any impact was "nullified" because of the areas left untouched.

At numerous previous workshops the point had been reiterated: that successful retention and instruction of black and other minority students demanded nothing less

than a "total institutional response to the requirements of operating a multi-ethnic campus." This meeting was for suggesting, examing, analyzing. . .for asking exactly how one goes about the task of creating and maintaining policies and practices that will insure a multi-ethnic campus—not just in terms of numbers, but in spirit as well.

Recognizing the fact that any structural approach is going to be "very limited," as Dr. Wayne Anderson, Special Assistant to the President at Johns Hopkins University, phrased it, and that any model has to be adaptable to local needs and situations, the group nevertheless isolated some indispensable ingredients. Among these were: commitment from the president and top administrative and governing levels of the university; high-level responsibility for university-wide planning; comprehensiveness; a continuing, permanent setup rather than ad hoc or crisis-oriented committees and programs; and minority input, representation and feedback at all levels.

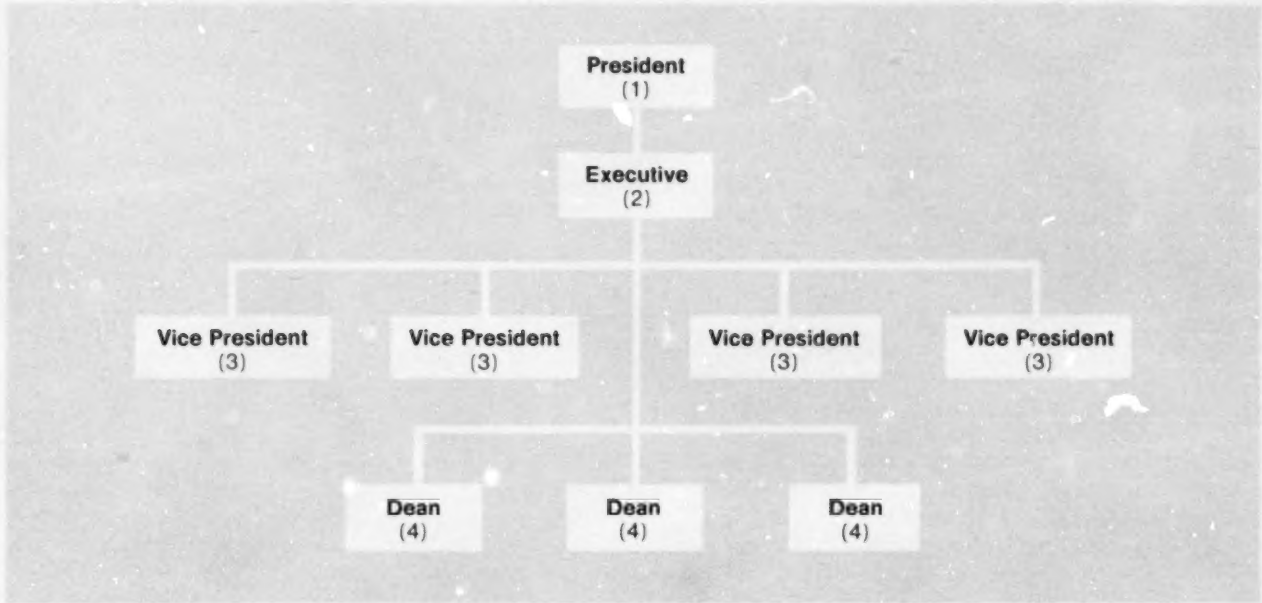
"Where the buck stops"

Governing boards of universities are policy-setters, and conference participants urged that no less than the university governing board establish policies to encourage multi-ethnicity on campus. One suggestion was that the board establish a permanent committee on planning to include the university president. Acting either as a decision-making body, advisory body or both, the committee would not only include minorities but, as Dr. Jackson phrased it, "consult broadly, especially among the constituency of those who will be affected the greatest by the implementation of the policies."

Since governing boards traditionally manage university funds and properties, approve educational programs, and select the university president, the impact of a visible and sincere commitment here would be dramatic.

If the board is the policy-setter, the president is the tone-setter. He's also, as Dr. Jackson, himself a college president, put it, "where the buck stops." His commitment or lack of it to university-wide planning for minorities can be read and seen everywhere on campus. As Dr. Anderson summed up, "people

CHOOSING A PLANNING MODEL:
A Matter of Knowing Your University's Roots and Tapping Them



To insure a multi-ethnic campus in spirit as well as numbers, planning structures are needed. In the above chart of a typical university hierarchy, the person(s) with the operational responsibility for university-wide planning for minorities might be: 1) a staff person in the president's office; 2) a top executive of the university, such as a provost or vice chancellor; 3) one vice president or a committee composed of all vice presidents; or 4) one dean or a committee composed of the deans of each division or school.

There are advantages and disadvantages to each approach, which each university must weigh in light of its locus of power, personalities of key administrators, and campus size and structure, for there is no "ideal" form of organization to do the job. The model a university chooses has to be generic, organic to that institution.

Institutionalizing Responsiveness

Setting up a structure to encourage ethnic diversity at a university is a goal that can sound not only massive, but also unwarrantedly optimistic.

Many of us, for one thing, are suspicious of bureaucracies, uneasy about their competence to deal with or initiate change.

But it goes deeper. A cynic is an optimist, thwarted, as the saying goes. Black or white, we are frustrated, angry over this wound, racism, that does not heal. "People are so tired," said a recent commentator on the televised *Black Perspective on the News*, unwittingly, perhaps, capturing the voice of all America. "Yes," another guest responded, "but can we afford to be?"

The tiredness, frustration and anger of people involved in the "drama of changing race relations" is a theme common to Drs. Glenwood C. Brooks, Jr., and William E. Sedlacek. "Change always incorporates discomfort and doubt," is the way they phrase it in their book, *Racism in American Education: A Model for Change*, to be released this spring by Nelson Hall.

They should know. Brooks and Sedlacek were the co-founders of the Cultural Study Center at the University of Maryland—College Park. Sedlacek is Research Advisor and Brooks was Director (until recently when he assumed the post of Chief of Equal Postsecondary Education for the Maryland Council for Higher Education) of the center, which conducts intercultural and race-related research and then uses it to help eliminate racism in education.

As has been documented elsewhere, progress is visible on the College Park campus. It now has a standing policy, for example, that the minimum predicted freshman grade required for admission can be computed with or without the use of achievement tests. Undoubtedly, the alternate admissions routes contribute to the university's minority enrollment, which stands at 15 per cent—more than twice the national average.

This black (Brooks)-white (Sedlacek) research team also developed a scale to measure racism (the SAS, or Situational Attitudinal Scale) which is now administered and discussed with over 5,000 entering freshmen in each summer's orientation process. And, believing that racism takes forms that are "peculiar to education and educators," Brooks and Sedlacek were instrumental in getting a graduate course they teach on "Education and Racism" accepted as a permanent catalog listing.

Clearly, this research-writing-teaching team is committed to working within institutional settings for institutional change. In a series of telephone interviews, they explained why.

"There is a difference between individual racism and institutional racism," explains Sedlacek. Individual or "one-to-one" racism is "what most of us think of as racism. But," he emphasizes, "the racism that affects people's lives the most is of the institutional variety—all the regular procedures, the systems in our lives."

"If you change structures," says Brooks, "there is a greater possibility of behavioral and attitudinal change occurring."

Brooks adds that it is often difficult for whites (or whatever group has the control) to understand that society **is** a set of institutions, just as it is difficult for some to see how much power they have in that society.

These different perceptions of whites and blacks—reflections of differences in lives and environs—are the starting point for their model which, in six progressive stages, attempts to answer what in their numerous speeches they have been asked so many times: "I want to eliminate racism. . .now what? What's the first step? "

In 1968, a 26-year-old doctoral student, Glenwood Brooks, Jr., arrived at the University of Maryland—College Park.

Then the only black in the counseling center's research assistant pool, Brooks soon met and became friends ("I suspect out of symbiotic need," he now says) with Dr. William Sedlacek, the similarly-aged white assistant center director.

The two's mutual interest in counseling and research (Dr. Sedlacek is also an associate professor of measurement and statistics), particularly in reference

"Similarities will take care of themselves"

"There's one trap that people trying to achieve racial interrelatedness fall into," says Sedlacek, "and that is emphasizing similarities. We have to get away from the idea that we're all the same," he says, pointing out that when differences between blacks and whites are not acknowledged and dealt with the result is "never a relationship, just a cliche exchange." Brooks concurs. "When you deny differences, you deny people their feelings and their perceptions," he says. "Each person has to develop a personal perspective."

To many people this first step seems almost heretical because, as Brooks points out, "in this country we've equated 'different' with 'bad.'"

The team does not deny similarities between the races, of course; it just feels that similarities have a way of "taking care of themselves." Differences don't.

For this reason they feel it's important that people air their attitudes about the differences between races. In their model, this is done in

s to Minority Needs: One Model

to minorities, was auspicious.

From their friendship evolved an unusual bi-racial team approach to human and race relations consulting, which they are employing in public schools and colleges throughout the country.

It also led to their co-founding, in 1969, the Cultural Study Center, a unique action-oriented research center committed to racial change in education. In the accompanying article, Dr. Brooks and Dr. Sedlacek discuss their strategy for eliminating racism and establishing multi-ethnicity on the university campus.

the presence of a black-white consulting team, who listens to the audience's comments and unemotionally sorts out fact (i.e., valid observations of differences) from "uncritically internalized stereotypes."

In the application of the model (in workshops, for example) the first stage usually relies heavily on Brooks, who acts as sort of an "encyclopedia of stored personal experiences" on being black. Sedlacek likewise contributes experiences about how a white relates to the black experience.

People apparently need to have a "person unlike themselves" present, (i.e., a black with a white audience; a white with a black audience) Brooks adds, to increase their awareness, "There's almost a bit of drama in integration, in the process of social change," he says. "Whites want to know what they're getting into. They want to make sure that a minority **is** a minority, that what's being called oppression **is** oppression. They want," he summed up, "to know the details, to know how gruesome it is" before committing themselves to share in "the burden of change."

"The model is only as good as its outcomes. . ."

The second stage in Sedlacek and Brooks' model has to do with understanding racism. "We're not interested in motives or intentions," says Sedlacek. "We're interested in whether there are negative consequences to an action for members of a certain group in society. . .if so, then we have racism."

Put in educational terms, "if blacks end up receiving less education, it doesn't matter whether the school didn't mean that to happen." Similarly, a teacher who is "easier" on black students—regardless of his or her reason—is contributing to their educational unpreparedness and thus acting racist.

Part of the reason that step two is necessary is that people apparently have defense mechanisms that prevent them from perceiving their own biases and intentions. "Most people have a real need to deal with their own attitudes about race," Sedlacek concludes. Not finding an adequate measure of racial attitudes, he and Brooks developed one, the SAS. Taking this test and discussing it comprises the third step of their model.

Once one is confronted with an index of his or her bias, some sort of analysis is needed. Step four of the model provides this, usually in the form of role-playing to help people understand the sources of their racial attitudes, "to examine, why we feel the way we do about minorities and why we need to do something about it."

Steps five and six of Sedlacek and Brooks' model are concerned with setting goals and setting strategy, respectively.

Goals—"the standards you're using to judge whether or not you're successful"—should be very specific and behaviorally oriented, both men report. "Invariably, most people set goals that are too broad, non-specific." Included in each goal should be a time frame ("we would like to increase the number of black teachers by ten per cent by 1975") and a method of evaluating the extent of accomplishment.

Lack of adequately defined goals, Sedlacek says, often leads people to think that they have failed when, in fact, they may have succeeded. "Success is not a 100 per cent thing," he emphasized. "It's a scale."

Goals also can help a person or organization remain "thick-skinned" in the wake of the inevitable hostility that change brings, because one can objectively measure success by matching results with goals, instead of relying on the subjective (and usually rare) compliment or verbal reinforcement.

The final stage of the model is devoted to how one changes behavior; that is, what strategy one uses to insure the accomplishment of one's goals.

Sedlacek reports that most people make the "classic mistake" of trying to establish strategies without having acquainted themselves with the program or determining goals. "They walk into a room and say, 'what shall we do about this problem?' when one-half of the people don't know that there is a problem, and the other-half don't understand what the problem is."

Another common problem is confusing goals with strategies—apparently another version of confusing intentions with results. "People will establish a goal," Brooks recounts, "but then the enthusiasm dies because there's no next step. You need a strategy. You need to say exactly how you plan to go about eliminating racism."

But perhaps the key ingredient in their recipe for change is the strategy called, simply, "self confidence." As they put it, "Few people in the world are as optimistic as an effective change agent. For he or she believes and regularly demonstrates that things can get better; that change is possible; that effort in behalf of change is worthwhile."

won't be involved if the president doesn't stay involved, if he doesn't keep in touch with the people he's appointed to be responsible."

Commitment in this area may require, as Dr. Jackson suggested, "more personal involvement than would be necessary with most campus programs." Dr. Anderson agreed. "The compelling nature of the problem demands that it be part of the president's responsibility."

The main role the president plays is assigning responsibility—deciding who's going to decide and advise on minority programs. This basic decision can't be arrived at in a vacuum. "A president can't just say, 'I've given it to so-and-so to be executed,'" emphasized another conference participant. "The model has to be generic, organic to the institution."

Dr. Anderson concurred. "The president can't be arbitrary here. He has to consult with a number of people—not necessarily people who are prestigious, but those who are in some way influential, those who have their ears to the ground and know what is and isn't happening."

With considerable input from all levels of the university community, then, the president appoints a person directly responsible for minority (or, "human," as an increasing number of schools are calling it to emphasize the multi-ethnic goal) affairs.

Conference participants generally agreed that someone with at least vice presidential stature should be responsible for institution-wide coordination of minority efforts. But, numerous variables will effect the selection of the appropriate person.

"Personality is a critical factor," numerous sources volunteered. Needed, as Dr. Groomes put it, is someone that is not only "responsible but responsive." A person can be too autonomous or too sensititve to criticism. The person whose title would seem to make him or her the natural choice might be too busy, too removed from day-to-day operations, or too convinced, as one administrator boasted, that "I treat all the students the same. They're all white when they walk through this door."

Locus of power in an institution—or, as Dr. Anderson put it, "When you leave the president's office, who really has the power?"—is often tied to personality. At some schools power is in the deans, or one dean; at others, it's with provosts or vice presidents. The president must choose whether the administrator should fill a staff (e.g., assistant to the president) or a line (e.g., vice president or dean) position.

Generally speaking, however, these two factors—power and responsiveness—should merge. Whereas many affirmative action officers are cushioned by several layers from the decision-making and power structure of the university, the official responsible for university-wide planning should not be.

The final variable is the structure of each campus. The size of the university (including not only the number of students, schools and/or divisions, but even the number of campuses) and the university's set-up (the number of levels in the hierarchy) will inevitably help determine the appropriate model for planning.

The president's appointment of a vice president or other administrator as director of university-wide planning for minorities is just the beginning of the university's response. Any university has extensive roots of people and structures, and these must be tapped to insure success.

The minority administrator's first task then is to determine what people should be called on and

Effective counseling for minority students usually involves outreach procedures, since "new student" groups are often wary of counseling setups. One successful approach is that used by the University of South Florida. There Black Peer Managers, such as Jimi Bridges, above right, contact black students, "by letter, then by phone, and if that doesn't work, we go out and track them down." The minority student paraprofessionals are trained to provide tutoring and social guidance.

what strategies and avenues used to guarantee that this planning is comprehensive and continuous. This is not one decision but many.

Should the administrator choose a few people, or appoint a committee? Should he look to the deans, whose power may be merely titular or to selected faculty members who may lack titles but not clout?

If a committee approach is agreed upon, should the university have numerous decentralized committees—one for each division and level—or one university-wide committee, composed of administrators, faculty members and students?

There are advantages and disadvantages to each approach. The former, for example, offers comprehensiveness and informality, as well as input from all levels; such committees, however, could also just end up being "reacting" rather than planning groups. Enormous duplication of effort could occur and despite it all, there would be little guarantee of coordination of efforts from committee to committee.

On the other hand, one campus-wide committee could insure coordination of effort, comprehensiveness and greater visibility. But it could also be cumbersome, with real work getting lost in rhetoric. The very presence, in fact, of "high-powered administrators" on the one hand, and students on the other, could thwart free and open discussion on both ends.

Whatever combination of people and methods a university chooses to use, conference participants agreed that a visible structure or organization is necessary to insure that planning for all ethnic groups is university-wide in input and impact.

"Meeting the needs of the folk"

Unlike many affirmative action officers whose present responsibilities may be almost entirely tied up with grievance procedures, the administrator of the university-wide planning will aggressively examine all institutional procedures to determine how they affect minority persons, and then initiate action to modify procedures which appear to be prejudicial, discriminatory or inconsistent with the concept of a multi-ethnic campus environment.

This will include examining housing (on and off campus); administration of the physical plant; secretarial services; campus security; athletics; student-teacher placements; the alumni booster club; health care; library services—in short, the gamut.

The university president is a "tone-setter" whose involvement in minority affairs is mirrored everywhere on campus.

One illustration of how one sets up structures to achieve this goal is the Human Affairs Office at Florida State University, directed by Dr. Groomes, who is also Assistant to the President. Although this office is located in the presidential suite, Dr. Groomes is confident that she's "not isolated" and that she is getting minority input and getting it quickly.

The reason is 44 human affairs associates—or "liaison folk" as she prefers to call them—all either workers or students at the university, who take on the additional paid role of representing their cohorts. All have an open-door and open-line directly to Dr. Groomes to report (anonymously, if they so choose) complaints or problems being encountered at different levels. The associates include not only faculty members, administrators and students, but also a janitor, secretary, lab technician, cafeteria worker and a yard crew member. None of the associates is bound by the typical channels of going through supervisors, deans, or whatever, because, as Dr. Groomes puts it, "They're meeting the needs of the folk."

As the above example indicates, comprehensive planning usually involves some sort of outreach procedure. This is critical because, as numerous sources confirmed, minorities are going to be uncomfortable asking for direction, guidance or advice on a predominantly white campus.

In addition, according to Dr. Pruitt, "counseling has not had the vogue among blacks and others who constitute 'new student' groups that it has had in white and upper-class groups. It appears to be "fairly well imbedded in the black culture," she says, to view asking for help as a "weakness." And although black students may well feel particularly vulnerable with a white counselor, she emphasized that black counselors, too, are often approached with reluctance.

For these reasons, programs such as the University of South Florida's Black Peer Counseling setup, where minority student paraprofessionals contact students ("by letter, then by phone and if that doesn't work, we go out and track them down") may be more valuable than just a walk-in service.

The outreach and the input, extending from the policy-making board and president to the cafeteria workers and students should guarantee that problems are dealt with early, thus avoiding the crisis-orientation that has marred too many university minority committees. As numerous, now-defunct, ad hoc minority planning committees can testify, it's difficult to be comprehensive without being continuous. For while Dr. Groomes summed up her job as "working myself out of one," the fact is, it will probably be quite some time before affirmative action officers and planners for minority students are queueing up in unemployment lines.

News From The Region

A Regents' bachelor's degree for non-traditional students is being inaugurated in **West Virginia's** 10 four-year colleges. Work experience and field-related knowledge can count toward the degree for those adults with one to three years of college who have been out of school for four or more years.

An economic impact study conducted by **North Carolina A & T State University** shows that local expenditures in 1973-74 by university-connected sources amounted to over $41.5 million. The study, which used the American Council on Education's model, was based on expenditures made by the university's students, faculty and staff, athletic fans and campus visitors, and the university itself.

The **University of Miami's** Center for Advanced International Studies has received a grant of $450,000 over a three-year period from the Scaife Family Charitable Trusts of Pittsburgh to support continuing activities and research.

Queens College in Charlotte, North Carolina, is cutting tuition by 5 percent and is trying to "hold the line" on room and board charges in 1975-76 in an effort to ease the financial burden of prospective students and to attract new students.

The Center for Energy Studies at the **University of Texas at Austin** has received two grants from the electrical power industry totaling $300,000 to help launch a geothermal energy study.

Duke University's Medical Center has received $3.5 million and the **University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center,** $2 million in grants to combat the nation's worst health problem—coronary artery disease. Other centers receiving similar grants from the National Heart and Lung Institute include **Johns Hopkins** and the **University of Alabama.**

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